

## I. INTRODUCTION

This position is located in the Meat Grading and Certification Branch, Livestock and Seed Division. The branch provides Federal grading and certification services for meat and meat products which is conducted voluntarily, and is financially self-supporting. These grading and certification services fulfill an important economic need of the livestock and meat industry by facilitating the nationwide identification and marketing of meat and meat food products.

The incumbent of this position performs the full range of meat grading and quality assurance monitoring duties, located at either a main station, substation, or other office locations which may involve details and/or reassignments to different geographical areas as needed and as determined by management.

## II. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Independently examines meat (in carcass or in cases where the USDA standards permit whole sale cut form) to evaluate the sex, texture, marbling, maturity, color, and other factors relating to product quality. Applies the official standards to determine the meat's quality grade, independently making all determinations, including borderline cases.

Determines the yield grade of carcasses and applicable cuts by applying official standards involving such factors as carcass weight, amount of fat, and area of the ribeyes. Is responsible for proper control and storage of official equipment.

In certain cases, reevaluates carcasses previously identified for grade after they have been ribbed. Records and forwards evaluation data for factors which determine the final quality and yield grade of specific carcasses identified for evaluation through the Carcass Data Service.

Following prescribed procedures, selects samples, and examines meat food products for compliance with contract specifications. Contracts primarily involve Federal, State, county, or municipal agency institutional purchasing programs, and typically involves examinations for product defects, packaging, weight, product trim, and quantity.

Independently defends grade or certification determinations to plant personnel, resolving most protests. Corrects errors observed and assists in maintaining relations with the plant's management by explaining applications of the standards and the related rules and regulations, by

advising on plant procedures as they relate to the requirements of the grading services, and by coordinating the grading work with plant activities.

Prepares and issues certificates, maintains permanent records relating to their work, and performs similar administrative tasks.

When designated, coordinates the work of several graders assigned to a specific location and at times, depending upon the location and workload, may serve as “grader-in-charge.”

Assists supervisors in the technical and administrative on-the-job training of GS-5 and GS-7 meat graders and intermittent employees. As designated, serves as “Acting Supervisory Meat Grader.”

Conducts public demonstrations; reviews retail meat outlets (i.e., supermarkets, meat markets, hotels, restaurants, etc.) for compliance with Public Law 272.

### III. EVALUATION FACTORS

#### I. Knowledge Required by the Position 950 points

Extensive knowledge of the standards, regulations, and rules to examine for compliance with contract specifications and/or grade (both for quality and yield) the products, making nearly all determinations independently.

Extensive knowledge of the characteristics, anatomical structure, types of cuts, processing techniques, and similar factors for an extensive range of meats and meat products as these factors pertain to determining the grade or acceptability of the product.

Skill in sampling, examining, and grading meat products, and in maintaining appropriate relations with industry personnel.

#### 2. Supervisory Controls 275 points

The supervisor makes the plant assignments, defining the duties in broad terms and providing general instructions. The employee carries out the daily work independently, sequencing and adjusting procedures as necessary. The employee independently performs the grading and certification work, making nearly all determinations, including borderline cases, without technical assistance. In addition, most "protests" or similar problems raised by the plant concerning the employee's grading or certification work are resolved by the employee. Only problems related to very unusual situations are referred to the supervisor.

The supervisor makes periodic visits to the plant to provide instructions on new or revised policies and procedures and to review the work. Certificates, worksheets, and other records are checked for overall conformance with applicable instructions. Technical proficiency of the grading or certification is spot-checked.

### 3. Guidelines

275 points

The guides consist of the official standards, rules, and regulations for grading, sampling, and certification manuals and procedural instructions, and administrative instructions.

The employee is responsible for properly selecting and applying the appropriate guides to a wide variety of situations and to an extensive range of products. In addition, the specific applications of the guides include a significant number of situations in which the grader makes determinations on product grade or acceptability; defends grade determinations and resolves problems with plant employees and management; and applies contract specifications under a wide variety of purchasing programs.

In addition, the number of guides applicable to the work is extensive, covering nearly all types of meats, acceptance work, and including a variety of administrative tasks.

### 4. Complexity

150 points

The work involves a variety of duties and assignments of varying complexities which require the application of different methods and the consideration of different factors depending on the amount and variety of grading or certification being performed or administrative problem to be solved.

In assignments where the grader may not have full on-site responsibility for relationships with plant management, the duties regularly encompass a variety of distinct products, product formulations, and contract specifications, and may involve both chain and rail grading. In assignments involving only a few products or product formulations, the grader has full on-site responsibility for relationships with plant management and responsibility for performing administrative duties such as maintaining records, scheduling work, etc.

### 5. Scope and Effect

150 points

The work involves applying the standards and regulations to determine the grade or acceptability of meat or meat-food products, and resolving problems with plant personnel concerning the determinations or related difficulties. The grade and certification determinations directly affect the economic value of the products and the financial interests of the producer, processor, wholesaler, or receiver of the meat.

### 6. Personal Contacts

25 points

Contacts include other Agricultural Commodity Graders, meat inspectors, other Federal and State Government personnel, consumers, and industry personnel such as company graders, department supervisors, and production managers.

7. Purpose of Contacts

120 points

The purpose is to resolve disputes concerning grade/certification determinations, to advise plant personnel and others of procedures or conditions, to generally maintain the cooperation of plant employees and management, and to coordinate grading services with plant production.

8. Physical Demands

50 points

Commodity grading work requires periods of physical exertion to lift and move boxes and cartons of product often weighing over 50 pounds; prolonged periods of standing, walking, stooping, bending, and climbing; physical coordination and finger dexterity in both hands to perform digital examinations of commodities; ability to detect abnormalities in the commodity through normal or corrected vision in at least one eye for distance, depth perception, and color; the ability to determine product quality through sensory perception, (taste, smell, etc.).

9. Work Environment

20 points

The work environment includes exposure to cold temperatures of coolers, which are 25 to 30 degrees Fahrenheit (and on occasion for short periods at subzero temperatures) and other processing areas: the high noise levels of industrial processing equipment; the risks of forklifts, meat hooks and/or meat products and other items moving or falling; slippery floors and stairs; and the risks of cutting and sawing equipment.

TOTAL POINTS - 2015 - GS-9